

Manzanita Site Council
2019-2020
Year End Report

The 2019-20 Manzanita Site Council consisted of:

Kim Boling (Principal); Kara Rawson (Kindergarten/Assistant Principal); Linda Deputy (Gr. 4 Teacher); Krista Westmoreland (Gr. 3 Teacher); Karen Kelley Wagner (Education Assistant); Polly Tanner (Education Assistant/Library Clerk); Nitin Patel (Parent); Frank Shadman (Grandparent); Grace Godlasky (Parent).

The Council met on the following dates:

January 28, 2020; February 25, 2020; March 31, 2020 (Cancelled/School Closure); May 19, 2020.

Our main project for the year supported District Deep Learning Goal #3 (Partner with families and community to achieve our strategic priorities) and aligned with our strategy of “engage in regular meaningful communication about student learning.” Our action step related to this strategy stated, “Plan for and implement a professional learning session to “unpack” the CFSD Transfer Goal for Self-Regulation and Reflection, as well as the performance indicators of this section of the CFSD Problem Solving Rubric.” The Transfer Goal for Self-Regulation and Reflection states, “Improve performance and persevere through challenges by applying deliberate effort, appropriate strategies, and flexible thinking.”

The Site Council spent considerable time concentrating on our school-wide homework procedures and the benefits of assigning or not assigning homework. We believe that homework fosters responsibility and, therefore, is an appropriate strategy that encourages deliberate effort from our students. Over the past few years, a No Homework Policy debate has surfaced among parents and teachers. Perceptions vary among parents, students, and teachers. Our first task as a team was to identify sound research versus bias opinion articles. Research articles we discussed all indicate a positive influence homework has on content area student performance. One article indicated that students who received homework one week performed better on content area assessments the following week (Cordova et al., 2019). This same cohort of students performed lower on content area assessments when no homework was assigned. In addition,

Their findings show that: (a) academic achievement was positively associated with the amount of homework completed, (b) the amount of homework completed was related to the homework time management, (c) homework time management was associated with the approach to homework, (d) and the approach to

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homework, like the rest of the variables of the model (except for the time spent on homework), was related to the student's academic motivation (i.e., academic goals).

Overall, our school-wide efforts for the past few years has been focused on improving student academic and behavioral mindsets by explicitly teaching mindfulness strategies and goal setting strategies. According to the findings from Cordova et al. (2019), assigning homework (consistent among grade levels) is one strategy to help us achieve our Self Regulation and Reflection goal.

Our next task was to critique Manzanita's homework policy for revision considerations based on our discussions. Manzanita's current homework policy is 2-pages in length and prescriptive for teachers, parents, and students. Due to the length and limitations of the current policy, we felt it was appropriate to revise our homework policy. Our goal was to be precise with our homework beliefs and encourage classroom autonomy.

We will communicate our revised homework policy to classroom teachers prior to the 2020-2021 school year. At this time, we will provide time for classroom teachers to offer feedback and further suggestions for improvement.

References:

Cordova, C., Pagtulon-an, E., & Tan, D. (2019). No Assignment Policy: A Boon or a Bane?. *International Journal of English and Education*, 8(1).

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Manzanita Elementary Homework Policy
2020-2021

Purpose of Homework:

Homework is one of the many learning activities in which students engage in outside of the classroom setting. Its purpose is to develop responsibility, self-direction, and organizational skills. Homework should extend learning and/or provide practice in applying concepts initially presented in the classroom. It gives opportunities for developing and fostering life-long learning practices and is a means for communication between home and school.

Homework Guidelines:

While homework may cover all subject areas, homework practices across all grade levels will include daily reading. Nightly reading may include: reading independently, reading to someone, and/or being read to by another person. Students in grades 1 - 5 may also engage in weekly math fact practice. Specific classroom homework expectations will be communicated at your child's Back to School Night.

Time Allotments for Homework:

Kindergarten - Grade 2	15 - 30 minutes*
Grade 3 - 5	45 - 60 minutes*

* Times are approximate

Teacher Responsibilities:

Teachers will communicate homework expectations to students and parents. Assignments provided to students will be clearly explained and students will understand when the assignment is due. Teachers will set up routines and procedures to help with organization and timely completion of assignments by students.

Student Responsibilities:

Students should understand assignments and turn them in on time while developing ways to monitor work completion at home and learning organizational strategies. Work should reflect high standards regarding effort and completeness. If an assignment is challenging, students should communicate this to their teacher.

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Parent's Responsibilities:

While students should assume responsibility for completing homework assignments, parents should take an active interest in supporting student's homework by:

- Providing a study area that works best for their child's individual needs
- Provide time for homework
- Encourage the child to complete homework on their own and for the child to seek clarification from the teacher if needed

*Strategies to help homework go more smoothly can be found in the following articles and by asking your child's teacher.

<https://childmind.org/article/strategies-to-make-homework-go-more-smoothly/>

Respectfully Submitted,

Kara Rawson
Site Council Facilitator